



**U.S. Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
Western District of Texas**

**Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FORMER BORDER PATROL AGENT SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON FOR ALLOWING  
DRUG COURIERS THROUGH SIERRA BLANCA CHECKPOINT WITHOUT INSPECTION**

**United States Attorney Johnny Sutton** announced that in El Paso this morning, former Border Patrol agent Aldo Manuel Erives was sentenced to 127 months in federal prison for allowing drug couriers through the Border Patrol's Sierra Blanca checkpoint without inspection.

"Instead of protecting us from the scourge of illegal drugs and drug dealers, Mr. Erives was helping them import their poison," stated United States Attorney Johnny Sutton. "It is always shocking when one who swore an oath to protect the innocent joins the criminals."

In addition to the prison term, United States District Judge Frank Montalvo ordered that Erives be placed under supervised release for a period of five years after completing his prison term.

On May 6, 2005, Erives pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute a controlled substance. By pleading guilty, Erives admitted that for two days beginning on September 17, 2004, he conspired with his brother, Jose Lehi Erives, and Robert Espino, a former Marfa Sector Border Patrol agent, to allow more than five kilograms of cocaine to pass through the checkpoint without inspection in exchange for more than \$5,000.

Four of Erives' co-defendants each face up to five years in federal prison after pleading guilty in May to conspiracy to possess a controlled substance with intent to distribute. Jose Lehi Erives is scheduled to be sentenced on September 29, 2005. Robert Espino is scheduled to be sentenced on October 4, 2005. David Garcia and Jesus Delgado, both former Marfa Sector Border Patrol agents, are scheduled to be sentenced on October 12, 2005. All sentencing hearings are scheduled to begin at 9:00am.

Also resulting from this investigation, Roberto Beltran faces up to ten years in federal prison after pleading guilty on June 2, 2005, to smuggling approximately 750 illegal aliens. Beltran, together with Lehi Erives, conspired with agents Erives, Espino, Garcia and Delgado to allow hundreds of illegal aliens safe passage through the Sierra Blanca checkpoint over a one-year period beginning January 2004. Beltran is scheduled to be sentenced on October 13, 2005.

These cases were investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Department of Homeland Security - Office of Inspector General. Assistant United States Attorneys Mark Greenberg and Greg McDonald are prosecuting these cases on behalf of the government.

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